

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this application, as currently amended, in light of the following remarks.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter; and claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,785,487, "Maeda") in view of Funaki (U.S. Patent No. 6,707,471, "Funaki").

In this reply, Applicant amends claims 1, 5, 6, and 12; and cancels claims 4 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-21 are thus currently pending. The changes to the claims find non-limiting support in the originally-filed application on page 27, lines 7-10; page 29, lines 9-19; from page 21, line 16, to page 24, line 19; and in Figs. 6 and 7, for example. No new matter has been added.

Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the § 101 rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-21 for the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action asserts at page 2 that "[a] button (OK button, Cancel button), per se, is non-functional descriptive material . . . is rejected as being a non-patentable abstract idea." Applicant respectfully disagrees, and submits that a button in an image forming apparatus is not an abstract idea. However, in the spirit of moving prosecution forward, Applicant amends independent claim 1 to recite "an OK button for displaying a short cut button on the initial screen" and independent claim 12 to recite "an OK button so as to display a short cut button on the initial screen," thereby specifying the function of the OK button and ensuring that the OK button is not a mere abstract idea. Applicant also amends dependent claims 20 and 21 to recite "a cancel button for canceling the setting of the image forming condition . . . without displaying a short cut button on the

initial screen,” and amends claim 21 similarly, thereby specifying the function of the cancel button even further and ensuring that the cancel button is not a mere abstract idea. Further, Applicant submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate the non-abstract character of the “short cut” buttons both from the explicit “short cut” qualifier and the specific mention in independent claims 1 and 12 of “short cut buttons for redisplaying the setting screens.”

Therefore, Applicant submits in light of the foregoing amendments and remarks that claims 1-21 do not claim non-functional abstract material. Applicant thus respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the § 101 rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-21.

Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the § 103(a) rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-21 for the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action concedes at page 3 that Maeda “does not explicitly disclose the setting screen includes an OK button for enabling the setting of the image forming condition” but asserts that Funaki “descloses an OK button for executing a process based on inputted data (column 7, lines 51-60).

In response, Applicant amends independent claim 1 to recite that “the setting screen includes an OK button for displaying a short cut button on the initial screen” and that, when there is an input to operate the OK button, (1) “the inputted setting of the image forming condition is enabled” and (2) “short cut buttons for redisplaying the setting screens on which the image forming conditions were set are collectively displayed in a list on the initial screen.” Along the same lines, Applicant amends independent claim 12 to recite “receiving an input to operate an OK button so as to

display a short cut button on the initial screen" and "enabling the inputted setting of the image forming condition and collectively displaying short cut buttons for redisplaying the setting screens on which the image forming conditions were set in a list on the initial screen when the input to operate the OK button is received."

Funaki discloses an OK button 80 and explains that "[i]f the OK button 80 is selected, it is judged that the integrated entry has been completed, allowing the procedure to go to step S5" (c. 8, ll. 16-18). Thus, Applicant submits that Funaki's OK button 80 merely completes an input on the integrated entry screen 50 and does not relate to "short cut buttons for redisplaying the setting screens on which the image forming conditions were set," as recited in amended independent claim 1 and similarly recited in amended independent claim 12.

In addition, Applicant submits that Funaki does not teach or suggest short cut buttons displayed on the initial screen and that Maeda's shortcut keys fail to meet all the features of the claimed "short cut buttons." Maeda's shortcut keys 17, 18, and 19 (see, e.g., Fig. 8), to which "[i]t is possible to allocate desired functions selected from the 22 functions that the copier 1 has" (c. 6, ll. 32-33), do not meet the claimed "short cut buttons" because Maeda's basic screen and Maeda's other screens, including function list screens 12A and 12B illustrated in Figs. 4A and 4B, which lists Maeda's 22 functions, do not teach or suggest that "the setting screen includes an OK button for displaying a short cut button on the initial screen," as recited in amended independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 12. As a result, Maeda fails to teach or suggest that "short cut buttons for redisplaying the setting screens . . . are collectively displayed in a list on the initial screen . . . when there is an input to operate the OK

button," as recited in amended independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 12.

Therefore, Applicant submits that Maeda and Funaki, whether taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all the features of amended independent claims 1 and 12, and thus that none of claims 1 and 12, nor any of their dependent claims, are unpatentable over Maeda. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the § 103(a) rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-21.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and background art with which Applicant does not necessarily agree. Accordingly, Applicant declines to subscribe to any such characterizations unless expressly set forth in this reply.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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